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Implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/177

Note by the Secretary-General**

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 53/177 of 15 December 1998, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Assembly the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, which provides an overview of efforts under way in the area of industrialization for development, including international cooperation in support of developing countries in this field.

* A/55/150 and Corr.1 and 2.

** The report transmitted by the Secretary-General in the present note was received from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization on 25 August 2000.

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Industrial development cooperation: implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/177

Report submitted by the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization

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I. Introduction: the industrialization context

1. Manufacturing activity in developing countries and economies in transition will not expand, nor will Africa's industries revive, without at least some initiatives stretching beyond those normally associated with economic adjustment and stabilization. Until relatively recently, Governments and the donor community, including international agencies, paid relatively little attention to competitiveness. Economic policy makers saw the concept largely in terms of relative wage levels, inflation and exchange rates.

2. That situation has now changed. While, ultimately, competitiveness arises at enterprise level, the role of the government — and of industrial policy — cannot be emphasized enough. Inadequate skills, outdated technology, poor infrastructure and poor governance constrain social as well as industrial development.

3. All four elements of the "competitiveness mix" are dependent, in varying degrees, on the State. If a Government fails to maintain law and order, guarantee the security of the individual and of investment, protect intellectual property rights and provide an efficient infrastructure, adequate training, education and health systems, then competitiveness will never meet the global challenge.

4. Global dialogue on social development is increasingly being focused on the marginalization of countries failing to keep pace with competitive pressures for efficiency gains and on those that fail to share in the benefits of enhanced growth. Fighting marginalization and social inequality through sustainable industrial development entails the enhanced role of industry in socio-economic transformation. The contribution of industry to social development should be viewed in the wider context of linkages between industry and agriculture and industry and related services, as well as in the spin-off effects that enhance sectoral performance and social welfare. In the totality of these interlinkages, industry serves as a powerful source of employment-generation, income-creation and social integration.

5. The increasing share of developing countries as a group in global manufacturing value-added eclipses the fact that industrialization in the developing world remains uneven owing to the highly concentrated efficiency gains in a few countries in each region. Differences in industrial growth range from double-digit rates in a few countries to subdued or negative growth rates in many others. There are indications of further marginalization of latecomers in the sphere of industrialization in general, and a large number of African countries in particular, as well as a result of inequalities between countries and regions. The challenge at the beginning of the twenty-first century is to create an environment that avoids marginalization among countries and spreads the benefits of growth among people.

6. The main challenges of achieving an enabling policy environment relate to macroeconomic instability and structural constraints at meso- and microlevels. Industrial restructuring, privatization and private sector development represent key policy concerns. A supportive legal and regulatory framework coupled with the requisite physical infrastructure and institutional support facilities constitutes the key elements of a third generation of reforms to foster industrial competitiveness in international markets with emphasis on addressing social concerns.

7. Poverty alleviation through economic growth, employment and expansion of the economic sectors will not be automatically resolved by market forces and globalization alone. The promotion of certain patterns of industrial development is crucial for socially oriented development. A strategy focusing on micro- and small- and medium-scale enterprises, agro-industries, rural industrialization and regional industrial development with production and marketing networks in the value chain plays an important role in offering equality of opportunities to different segments of the population.

Response of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

8. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is supporting developing countries and economies in transition in adopting a third generation of reforms designed to achieve competitiveness and a place in global markets. These reforms are also designed to ensure that the new entrants to world markets encounter the human aspect of globalization and not its darker side, where wages

are driven ever lower, working hours become ever longer, human respect becomes ever scarcer and the social and economic fruits of globalization are enjoyed only by a few.

9. UNIDO's technical assistance programmes and global forum activities are set out to give people in member countries the education, training, information and knowledge no market forces will automatically create.

10. In order to better respond to the needs of the developing countries, UNIDO started a major reform exercise at the beginning of 1998. Having set initial priorities to ensure financial and administrative stabilization and a more streamlined organizational structure, UNIDO proceeded to revamp its services and activities.

11. The year 1998 ended with the successful launching of integrated technical cooperation programmes based on 16 service modules that had been articulated in interaction with experts from member States, the private sector and distinguished figures from the academic world. The enthusiastic approval and support of member States for these programmes and other aspects of UNIDO's transformation were expressed in unambiguous terms at sessions of the governing bodies.

12. During 1999 and early 2000, the organization concentrated on adjusting and refining the programming and implementation methods and on introducing quality control for its programmes and activities. UNIDO decentralized and delegated authority to intermediate management and to field offices. It also consolidated a matrix working structure designed to provide verifiable quality services in an integrated fashion.

13. The reform allows UNIDO to deliver integrated technical cooperation support according to the requirements of each region. Teams design and implement integrated programmes to ensure that the broad range of UNIDO's expertise is mobilized and coordinated for maximum impact in the field. The reality and depth of the transformation can be seen most clearly in the radical change in the composition of the organization's portfolio of programmes.

14. By the end of 1999, UNIDO had 29 approved integrated programmes around specific cooperation requests and by June 2000, 42 that are in the initial phase of implementation. Their total value is approximately US$ 280 million and they cover time periods of three to four years.

15. Nevertheless, in order to continue the implementation of reforms, UNIDO will require more resources in the form of voluntary contributions in the future. It will also need more political participation from its member States.

16. Towards that end, UNIDO organized a Forum on Sustainable Industrial Development within the framework of the eighth session of the UNIDO General Conference. The organization continues devoting time to analysing the substantive issues that constitute the leitmotif of UNIDO's mandate: industry, the growth process and industrial development, and the potential contributions of this process to the reduction and elimination of poverty and thus the promotion of equity.

17. UNIDO continues efforts to renew the interest of member States in the ongoing and increasingly relevant social development contribution of sustainable industrial development — the business of UNIDO.

18. The organization has an important role to fulfil in the new architecture of the international economic system. The revitalization of UNIDO offers the opportunity of working together to defeat poverty, inequality and backwardness.

II. UNIDO's industrial development cooperation activities

19. UNIDO continues to work on two different levels. First, it designs industrial development programmes for its clients and offers them technical support in putting them in place. Second, it provides the various actors involved in industrial development — Governments, representatives of industry from the public and private sectors, investors and others — with a platform for getting together to tackle some of the challenges facing developing countries. The present section describes in broad terms some of the activities carried out by UNIDO in this dual role and touches on the enhanced development support provided by the organization's expanded presence in the field.

20. The system of integrated programmes offers a series of interlinked activities within a given country

that draws on the cumulative expertise and resources of the organization as a whole rather than on individual organizational units. UNIDO designs one tailor-made programme for each country that is a reflection of its development priorities and aspirations.

21. To develop a programme for each targeted country, a team is established comprising from 6 to 10 specialists in industry, technology, investment, environmental issues and information. Since assistance to Africa is one of UNIDO's priorities, the initial batch of integrated programmes to be developed was for selected African countries. UNIDO attaches particular importance to the integration of women in industry and assistance to entrepreneurship development among women, which are featured prominently in almost all integrated programmes.

22. UNIDO cooperates with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations specialized organizations to ensure that the programmes complement their technical cooperation projects, that UNIDO's assistance fits into the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)/common country assessments (CCAs) and, lastly, that complementarities lead to sustainable human development.

23. At the end of June 2000, UNIDO's new system of integrated programmes had just completed one and a half years of operation. At this early stage, it is premature to assess conclusively the wide-scale impact of the integrated programmes on the lives of men, women and children in client countries. Impact is, without doubt, an eloquent measure of success, but it is not the only evidence of results. Nevertheless, the solid groundwork has been laid and the tools and methodologies that have been put in place will ensure the future success of the programmes and the sustainable industrial development of the countries that own them. The new approach has resulted in a perceptible improvement in the way the organization coordinates with client and donor countries as well as with other agencies. This in turn has been reflected in a heightened interest on the part of donors.

III. UNIDO field offices

24. A number of measures were introduced to assign greater responsibility to field staff as part of the organization's transformation, and in 1999, UNIDO began its gradual progression from a predominantly headquarters-type organization with a field component, to a field organization with its headquarters in Vienna. The 44 per cent increase in resources allocated in the current biennium budget to the field programme demonstrates the importance attached by member States to activities in the field.

25. By the end of 1999, there were 23 country offices headed by UNIDO representatives, the vast majority of whom had previously held positions at headquarters. During the year 2000, five regional centres were established (Egypt, Ethiopia, Thailand, Uruguay and India) and an additional four country offices will have been converted into regional centres by the end of 2000. The regional offices are headed by a director and assisted by two technical officers, who carry out programmatic and analytical work. In a number of countries where there was no UNIDO representative, the organization established national focal points. In a few other countries where there was no UNIDO presence, arrangements were made with UNDP to place a UNIDO officer in the local UNDP country office.

26. The main role of the field offices is to promote and support technical assistance in order to encourage national capacity-building for industrial development at the level of government, the public sector, industrial associations and enterprises. This in turn encourages local ownership of our integrated programmes.

IV. The global forum function of UNIDO

27. In addition to carrying out its role as a provider of integrated technical cooperation services in the field of industry, UNIDO continues to act as a global forum for the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge related to the industrial development process. The Business Plan, approved by member States in 1997, sees the global forum function as an important component of UNIDO's mandate to strengthen industrial capacities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Within the framework of the global forum function, the organization implements programmes in the following fields: industrial policy advice based on action-oriented research; institutional capacity-building at the country and sectoral levels; quality, standardization and metrology; industrial information

through networking, including information on the transfer of technology; and industrial statistics.

28. On the basis of these programmes, UNIDO is undertaking a wide range of activities, beyond the confines of specific technical cooperation projects, to support and promote industrial development. In particular, these activities include initiatives to understand the dynamics of the industrial development process and disseminate lessons learned through specialized meetings and publications covering a diversity of industry-related issues. In the course of these activities, UNIDO promotes partnerships and supports global industrial cooperation between developed and developing countries as well as among developing countries themselves. In so doing, UNIDO acts as an honest broker to facilitate the spread of industrial information, knowledge, technology and investment.

V. Meetings

29. UNIDO has organized a wide variety of seminars, workshops and expert group meetings and encourages its staff members to participate in meetings organized by other relevant agencies, institutions and organizations. During 1999 alone, nearly 100 meetings of this kind were held by UNIDO. These ranged in scope from highly specialized discussions on closely circumscribed topics between small groups of experts to large conferences covering a broad spectrum of issues.

30. Particularly noteworthy in the latter category were two regional forums on industry held in Bangkok and Cairo in September and November 1999, respectively. Participants included high-ranking government officials and diplomats, influential business leaders, eminent academics, senior staff members of a number of international organizations and representatives of several civil society organizations. The Asia-Pacific Regional Forum addressed such important and topical issues as the implications of the Asian crisis for industry and industrial policy in Asia and the Pacific; the reforms and strategies to promote small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) development as a means of enhancing industrial competitiveness; and the need for strategic industrial policies for the new millennium. Similarly, the Arab Regional Forum covered pressing issues such as the requirement of adopting new technologies and industrial policies to link Arab regional markets with the industrialized world; improving labour productivity and the quality of industrial production in the Arab world; and developing job-creation strategies for the Arab countries based on the promotion of SMEs.

31. These regional meetings culminated in a global forum on sustainable industrial development held in Vienna from 29 November to 1 December 1999 on the occasion of the eighth session of the UNIDO General Conference. The forum was the first of its kind held during a meeting of a policy-making organ.

32. The four substantive sessions of the forum dealt with a number of fundamental issues related to industrial development. The first panel described the continued importance of industry for economic development, the factors affecting the location of industry and the important contribution of foreign direct investment (FDI) and skill upgrading to technology transfer and industrial development. The second panel provided policy-related advice on how to enhance national industrial competitiveness by promoting the integration of domestic enterprises into global value chains and attracting foreign investment. The third panel discussed the implications of industrial development for the environment and energy use and concluded that government policies towards the environment should be aimed at promoting industrial opportunities in the environmental field rather than seeking to restrain industrial growth. Finally, the fourth panel provided an overview of a specific UNIDO programme to encourage a partnership between government, national SMEs, a transnational corporation, industrial associations, academic institutions and an international civil society organization.

33. UNIDO concluded from the forum that both the first generation of economic reforms, which are related to the need to introduce sound macroeconomic systems, and the second generation of reforms, based on the strengthening of institutional capacities, are extremely necessary if developing countries are to cope with the challenges of globalization. At the same time, however, the forum showed that the time had come for a third generation of reforms aimed at helping to connect the population of developing countries and the world at large with the process of globalization. This new challenge would need the mobilization of information, skills, technology and knowledge to enable the industries of developing countries and

countries with economies in transition to become integrated into global value chains and to thereby benefit from the process of globalization rather than be marginalized by it.

34. Specifically, the forum underlined the continued importance of industry for development. It also pointed out that industrial development itself might require some special support measures. These could include the promotion and establishment of "soft infrastructure" needed to help countries to cope with the information flow necessary to integrate themselves into international suppliers' networks.

VI. UNIDO as partner in development

35. UNIDO's new integrated approach to sustainable industrial development has held the attention of the organization's donor and client countries. While many of UNIDO's resources have naturally been directed at the formulation and implementation of the integrated programmes, UNIDO has continued its efforts to strengthen the other half of its dual role — that of serving as a global forum on industrial development.

36. One endeavour is to use UNIDO's limited resources as a lever to forge partnerships with universities, research institutions and other civil society organizations. This will help UNIDO to acquire a stronger analytical base and at the same time encourage greater international cooperation in the area of industrial development in developing countries. It will also enhance the normative capabilities of UNIDO — an imperative in the context of both United Nations reform and today's global economy.

37. One such partnership is with Oxford University. On 6 October 1999, UNIDO and Oxford signed a two-year agreement for research on African economic performance under a joint research programme to be funded by UNIDO. This is the first agreement of its kind between UNIDO and a university in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and includes funding for a two-year UNIDO research fellowship at the University's Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) within the Institute of Economics and Statistics. Under the terms of the agreement, UNIDO and the University will "enter into a programme of cooperative research ... with the aim of enhancing and disseminating knowledge and skills that foster Africa's improved economic performance, particularly through the promotion of sustainable industrial development".

38. The research programme is a direct response to the mandate given to UNIDO in its Business Plan to focus its activities on least developed countries, particularly those in Africa. There will be a special training programme for African civil servants aiming at capacity-building among African policy makers, especially in those countries where UNIDO has initiated, or will initiate, an integrated programme.

39. One of the most difficult hurdles facing developing countries in their efforts to increase exports is raising product quality to meet international standards. The gap in standards is the reason for the extensive use of non-tariff barriers which frequently prevent market access by the developing world. To address this constraint, UNIDO has also embarked on a public/private partnership programme seeking to develop a viable new approach towards capacity-building for SMEs and to do so jointly with major players in the business world who have an interest in strengthening their supply chains.

VII. Publications

40. In order to ensure the widest possible dissemination of lessons learned from its seminars, workshops, conferences and expert group meetings, UNIDO pursues an active publications programme. These publications include not only papers presented at meetings and/or summaries of their proceedings but also a wide range of other books, reports, working papers and brochures.

41. There are currently over 21,000 fully indexed Industrial Development Abstracts (IDA) covering the full range of UNIDO's activities. UNIDO's Industrial Inquiry Service provides answers to specific inquiries from developing countries on a range of topics related to industry. The information is available through UNIDO's International Referral System (IRS), a network of specialized information services that enables searches by field of industry, type of activities, language and form of replies. The system has been developed over the last six years to respond to a growing number of technical inquiries in a rapidly changing and competitive environment. Acting as an honest broker, UNIDO uses IRS to search for the most

judicious choice of technologies, manufacturing and equipment alternatives for its clients.

42. A recent highlight was the launch of a new UNIDO publication, entitled *African Industry 2000: The Challenge of Going Global*.[1] The publication has contributed to the understanding of the threats and opportunities facing sub-Saharan Africa at the turn of the century. Its analysis and examination of emerging issues have helped to provide an understanding of how the continent's share of the gains from globalization needs to be achieved in the years to come.

43. The increasing role of information and knowledge as a foundation for industrial growth and competitiveness has sharpened UNIDO's focus on collection and analysis of industrial information, knowledge products derived from this process and approaches to widespread dissemination of this information. The organization has sharpened its activities in delivering such knowledge to client countries and is assisting them in improving their own capacity to collect, process and provide information as knowledge products.

44. To support technical cooperation, an innovative approach was introduced using plant-level data to analyse the dynamics of SMEs. In response to a decision on the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC),[2] a new classification of industrial activities was adopted.

45. The UNIDO web site was redesigned to include the newest technological developments and to improve navigation and user-friendliness. While the web site is used primarily to disseminate information, it is increasingly important for external users interested in identifying new business partners.

46. UNIDO assists Governments in improving their industrial governance operations by establishing information support networks. It also engages in the establishment of commercial information centres to support SMEs information needs. Networking has been introduced in virtually all integrated programmes and has proved to be of considerable help in synergizing the activities of the various service modules within the programme implementation.

VIII. UNIDO's services

47. An important component of the transformation of UNIDO was the grouping of services into 16 service modules, reflecting the UNIDO approach in dealing with major concerns in industrial development. The refocusing aligned the programmatic focus of activities with the organization's long-term goal of sustainable industrial development — the so-called three Es: competitive Economy, productive Employment and sound Environment. To varying degrees, the integrated programmes developed and initiated in 1999 combine these service modules to meet the initial industrial development requirements of countries assisted by UNIDO. For a comprehensive description of the service modules and a list of the integrated programmes, the UNIDO web site may be consulted (www.unido.org). The service modules are as follows:

1. Industrial policy formulation and implementation;
2. Statistics and information networks;
3. Metrology, standardization, certification and accreditation;
4. Continuous improvement and quality management;
5. Investment and technology promotion;
6. Environmental policy framework;
7. Climate conventions and Kyoto Protocol;
8. ,9. Energy efficiency and rural energy development;
10. Cleaner production;
11. Pollution control and waste management;
12. Montreal Protocol;
13. SME policy framework;
14. Policy for women's entrepreneurship development;
15. Entrepreneurship development;
16. Upgrading agro-industries and related technical skills.

IX. Focus on Africa and the least developed countries

48. The economies of least developed countries — particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa — face serious challenges in the process of globalization, and the ongoing economic reforms have not yielded the expected levels of economic growth, investment and poverty reduction. Efforts to introduce economic reforms have been hampered by limited technical capacity in the public and private sectors to formulate and implement the requisite policies and strategies. Other key constraints on economic transformation and industrial expansion include:

- Weak economic governance;
- Lack of industrial response to stabilization measures;
- Weak institutional and physical infrastructure;
- Small domestic markets and limited access to regional and global markets;
- Slow pace of regional integration;
- Absence of a critical mass of competitive medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs.

49. In the light of these constraints, UNIDO integrated programme assistance to Africa and least developed countries emphasizes institutional capacity-building for the enhancement of industrial competitiveness and private sector development. The basic philosophy is to give key stakeholders in industrial subsectors the basic tools to determine their own industrial development needs and priorities and to assist them in defining and establishing their own comprehensive medium- and long-term industrial development agenda.

X. System-wide cooperation

50. To varying degrees, cooperation with other organizations — both within the United Nations system and elsewhere — is an integral part of virtually every UNIDO activity. At its most formal level, collaboration can be the very essence of a programme, for example, in funding a UNIDO development activity by a multilateral funding institution. At the opposite end of the spectrum, it can take the form of an ongoing relationship with ad hoc in-kind contributions to or from the partner organization. The experience of 1999 typically demonstrated activities ranging from meetings and publications to joint technical cooperation programmes. Significant results were yielded in a number of cases. Increasingly, UNIDO inputs are requested based on demonstrated sectoral specialization, as has been the case for cooperation with UNDP in the formulation and implementation of Global Environment Facility (GEF)-financed projects.

51. UNIDO's integrated programmes and field-level emphasis have endowed the Organization with highly appropriate means to contribute to the UNDAF process, which is a direct response to the Secretary-General's reform programme and a key mechanism in developing a common system framework. UNIDO representatives serve as country-level focal points for the UNDAF exercise and as members of United Nations country teams. They also participate fully in United Nations country-level meetings in the development of various system-wide approaches and play a critical role in the preparation of CCAs. UNIDO has provided substantial inputs into the finalization of draft CCAs and the UNDAF guidelines. During the process of development of its integrated programmes, UNIDO ensures coherence and integration with UNDAF and the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s exercises. In 1999, UNIDO was engaged in the UNDAF process at the country level where no integrated programmes had yet been developed.

52. The following examples from 1999 provide an indication of the range and form of UNIDO's cooperation with other organizations:

- Cooperation with the Common Fund for Commodities can be illustrated by the approval of a new project on jute for Bangladesh;
- UNIDO's contributions to the work of the Committee for Donor Agencies for Small Enterprise Development included preparing two papers setting out the UNIDO approach to creating business centres;
- Based on UNIDO's expertise in quality, standardization and metrology, the European Commission enlisted UNIDO's assistance in preparing a technical cooperation programme for the West African Economic and Monetary Union countries;

- UNIDO's participation in GEF climate change programmes increased. The adoption of a resolution on the subject by the UNIDO General Conference underscored the importance of GEF for technical cooperation in industrial development as well as the comparative advantages of UNIDO for GEF;

- In addition to cooperation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States Department of Commerce, cooperation has been developed with the Centre for Coastal and Marine Sciences within the Natural Environment Research Council, Office of Science and Technology, and the United Kingdom's Department of Trade and Industry;

- A presentation at UNIDO by the President of the Inter-American Development Bank offered a historical overview of the development process in Latin America, and its current achievements, shortcomings and future plans;

- With the objective of developing and promoting industrial utilization of agro-wastes through radiation and biotechnology, cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) included inputs to a regional expert advisory group meeting at the Malaysian Institute for Nuclear Technology Research;

- In tandem with the International Centre for Science and High Technology, a significant technology foresight initiative was launched for Latin America and the Caribbean;

- An initiative with the International Fund for Agricultural Development to assist rural women in food-processing activities led to the preparation of the joint manual *Multi-purpose Village Workshop: Guidelines for Implementation*;

- UNIDO became a member of the group Standards Actions in the Global Market Forum, launched by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 1999, comprising 11 international organizations representing the private and governmental sectors with an interest in standardization. This culminated in an initial five-year cooperation with the Japanese Standards Association to create more widespread awareness of the concept and application of total quality management among Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries;

- The publication of the UNIDO/Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) study *Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development in Transition Economies: Policy Guidelines and Recommendations*[3] was the result of a long-term collaboration on policy guidelines and recommendations established by the Forum on Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development. A further joint activity resulted in the development of a computerized system for environmental impact assessment in biotechnology (biosafety);

- The inter-agency programme on capacity-building support for clean development mechanisms features cooperation with UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) as well as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as overall coordinator and facilitator;

- The All-India Seminar on Bamboo Development was the first step of an initiative for the Government of India Bamboo Development Plan. The seminar featured technical and coordination support from UNDP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan;

- UNIDO participated in an UNCTAD team of experts for the preparation of an investment and innovation policy review for Ethiopia. Cooperation on enterprise development programmes in selected countries was initiated. A joint regional seminar on enhancing the participation of women entrepreneurs in African economic activities was held in Burkina Faso;

- Implementation of the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding with UNEP was initiated in 1999 through signature of three technical annexes: two on coordination of the joint programme for national cleaner production centres and the third on cleaner technologies in artisanal gold mining;

- An internal exercise in investment and technology promotion aiming to create a new working culture and to adapt staff skills to rapidly evolving external realities benefited from a session held in

cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) on quality control and electronic commerce;

- Discussions initiated with the World Trade Organization on the joint development of trade-related activities for least developed countries resulted in an October meeting between the executive heads of the two organizations.

53. UNIDO demonstrated South-to-South technology transfer when it organized a meeting of more than 70 managers of research and development institutes, entrepreneurs and policy makers from nine African countries and India. The aim of the meeting was to forge partnerships for the production of alternative materials for low-cost housing. By the end of the event, organized under the auspices of the International Centre for Advancement of Manufacturing Technology, participants had signed some 45 contracts and five memoranda of understanding and initiated discussions on the purchase of licences for equipment production.

Notes

[1] Vienna, UNIDO, 1999.

[2] *Statistical Papers, No. 4, Rev. 3* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.90.XVII.11).

[3] Paris, OECD, 1999.